



Photo by Massimo Campanari

## Remember the Gumball Rally?

By Michael Stier | FocusCFO

A 1976 movie classic about a cross country road rally, with one of the greatest of movie lines of all time. Just prior to race start the Italian driver Franco (Raul Julia) rips off the rearview mirror from his sports car and tosses it aside proclaiming to his navigator (in a heavy Italian accent), "*And now my friend, the first-a rule of Italian driving... What's-a behind me is not important.*" [[Curious? Here's the scene in the movie.](#)]

I often think of this movie line when I hear from business owners, "*We have an accountant (or controller), we don't need a CFO.*" I can faintly hear Franco ranting in Italian.

Relying solely on your CPAs, accountants and controllers is like trying to drive forward only looking in your rearview mirror. By definition, their job is to look in the rearview mirror. They produce historical financial statements, implement controls, prepare taxes, and do some backward-looking analysis. Do you know a business owner who can even stay one the road, nonetheless reach their destination, while only staring in the rearview mirror? If so, I'd like to meet them.

No doubt your accounting folk are very capable. No critique of their skill or function. But the role could not be more different from a strategic-minded CFO.

The strategic-minded Chief Financial Officer (CFO) looks in the rear, around and forward! They help lead your organization by overseeing all financial activities – living in the present and looking to the future through continuous scenario-based planning... and thinks strategically about your company's future growth and value. And often are the trusted advisor and confidant to you, the entrepreneur/

owner/ CEO. A sage old adage... *there's a reason why your front windshield is much larger than the rear.*

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***Founded in 2001, FocusCFO is the leading onsite fractional CFO services provider in the Midwest and Southeast, with more than 100 CFOs and Area Presidents throughout Ohio, Michigan, Kentucky, Indiana, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, and North Carolina. FocusCFO works closely with small to medium sized businesses helping business owners gain control over three key financial and operational areas: increasing cash flow, reducing business risk, and creating a platform for scalable growth. This allows business owners to then realize full financial control and increased value in their businesses. For more information, visit us at [focuscfo.com](https://focuscfo.com) or follow us on [LinkedIn](#).***